

TOWN OF WEBSTER
Office of Selectmen
945 Battle Street/Rte. 127
Webster, NH 03303

Webster Board of Selectmen's Meeting – April 20, 2009

7:07 P.M. Roll Call – Present: Chairman Thomas Mullins, Selectman David Klumb and Selectman George Hashem.

The Board signed the payroll check and vendor manifests as well as the following for Administrative Assistant Judith Jones:

- Selectman Klumb made a motion to accept the minutes of April 6, 2009 as written; seconded by Selectman Hashem and approved. Selectman Klumb made a motion to accept the April 6, 2009 non-public session minutes as amended; seconded by Chairman Mullins and approved. Selectman Hashem made a motion to accept the April 10, 2009 non-public session minutes as written; seconded by Selectman Klumb and approved;
- Two Notice of Intentions to Cut were signed as follows: Timothy and Gerald Courser for Map 4-64 and Jonathan Croteau for Map 3-32;
- An Application for Veteran's Tax Exemption and seven reaffirmations of Veteran's Tax Exemption;
- Chairman Mullins signed the Notice of Appointment to the CNHRPC for Sue Rauth and Sue Roman after inquiring of Ms. Roman as to what is expected of these representatives. She advised that their main focus would be working with the workforce housing issues during the four annual meetings;
- Sue Roman and Sue Rauth volunteered to serve on the "Currier & Ives Byway Committee". Though the Board initially had not wanted to be a part of this venture, it really was not a choice. A total of four members were requested as well as a request for the Town to host at least one of the four meetings scheduled. The first meeting is scheduled to be held in Henniker on 4/28/09 at 7:00 p.m.;
- Three 2008 Abatement Applications that had been returned and processed by Avitar;
- Sick leave slip for Mrs. Jones;
- Signature Page of Personnel Policy revised and voted on December 1, 2008 as one had not previously been signed;
- Purchase Order #12 for FD to Sanel Auto Parts Co. for brake rotors & brake pad set in the amount of \$364.49; and
- A Land Use Change Tax and Warrant for the Tax Collector.

Selectman Klumb made a motion to withdraw \$905 from the Police Vehicle Maintenance Expendable Trust Fund established in 2009 for that purpose; seconded by Selectman Hashem and approved by the Board and the Police Chief.

Mrs. Jones will respond to a letter from Allan Hackel regarding his lots on Amherst Drive that will be deeded to the Town by a Tax Collector's Tax Lien Deed in May if taxes are not paid. Mr. Hackel requested that the Town clear his credit standing. This cannot and will not be done by the Board.

Police Chief Brian Milano presented his semi-monthly report.

Fire Chief Adam Pouliot advised of the following: the Department has responded to forty-nine emergency calls for the year; a crew responded to a fire in Alton and covered another station; all fire permits are currently suspended; a recent brush fire near Clough-Sanborn Hill Road burned approximately one acre with Hopkinton and Warner assisting; the Department attended a water rescue on Saturday with Mutual aid; Engine 2 needs approximately \$1,200 in repairs; vehicle inspections resulted in the need of additional maintenance on some of the vehicles; and lastly the defibrillator needs repairs totaling \$1,724 with a loaner currently being used. Chief Pouliot advised that he has checked on the cost of a new/used one with a new one costing approximately \$12,000 and a reconditioned one being \$4,000 to \$6,000. The Board inquired about any warranty, which a new or used defibrillator would have. Chief Pouliot is still looking into pricing and will advise the Board at the next meeting. He has someone interested in doing the Building Inspector for Webster at a cost of \$28 per hour. The Board discussed the pros and cons of having regular office hours for the inspection needs and any associated cost. Chief Pouliot advised that he has a back log of inspections needed. This issue will be put on the agenda for the next meeting. (The Board is still planning a meeting in the near future of all involved with the Building Permit process to include Provan and Lorber.)

Road Agent Emmett Bean advised that the dirt roads were drying up nicely.

The Board reviewed the recommendations of the Parks Commission as follows:

Matt Cummings	Member	2012
Aime Silver	Member	2012

Selectman Klumb made a motion to accept the recommendations of the Parks Commission; seconded by Selectman Hashem and approved.

Chairman Mullins opened discussion regarding the budget (as related to Public Safety Article) to the Board. He advised that there have been three public input meetings, material received from all Department Heads and the Board has worked with Financial Administrator Wendy Pinkham. Each Selectman gave their recommendations as follows:

1. Chairman Mullins identified money potentially available for an interfund transfer of \$30,000, noting there is still the rest of the year to go. He recommended putting \$14,000 back in the Police Budget and \$7,000 into the Fire Budget; amounting to about 2/3 of what might be available, which was as far as he was willing to go at this time, though things may change as the year progresses;
2. Selectman Hashem identified \$34,000 possibly available with \$16,000 for the Police Budget and \$8,000 for the Fire Budget; and
3. Selectman Klumb recommended \$14,000 for the Police Budget and \$7,000 to the Fire Budget.

Selectman Klumb reminded all that the last ice storm cost approximately \$40,000, which originally came from the operating budget (FEMA covered much of this with most of those funds going into the General Fund) with \$5,000 plus to be used this year for clean-up, with Chairman Mullins noting that there is always an unexpected expense due to weather regarding the roads.

Chairman Mullins recommended that the Board go with a reallocation of \$15,000 to the Police Department and \$7,500 to the Fire Department. Selectman Klumb made the motion to reallocate the amounts as stated above; seconded by Selectman Hashem and approved.

Discussion was opened to the public with the following comments:

Bruce Johnson wanted to know what figure the Police Department started with, which is what was reported on the MS 2 (Police was \$126,630 which included Special Detail). Selectman Hashem tried to explain the process used to reach these figures. The Board noted that they were not able at this time to tell where the new allocated funds were coming from. Selectman Klumb noted again that, as the year goes along, further adjustments will be made and the Board would do the best they can. Chairman Mullins advised that the Board would not make any staffing decisions, only the allocation of funds. Mr. Johnson inquired about cuts in the Financial Administration. Selectman Hashem noted there was no back-up for the office, but any raises had been cut and there may be some cut in the part-time secretary, plus cuts in any other areas possible, but noted there was not much wiggle room.

Geoff Martin noted that part of the confusion was when the Townspeople cut from one Article and inquired as to how were the numbers were arrived at in Article 21. Mrs. Pinkham advised that it was based on a percentage for each line after all contracted items were deducted, noting that the budget she shows in the accounting system was broken down finer than the State reporting form (which typically requires only one line for Fire Department, Police Department, etc.). Mr. Martin thought the method used was applied arbitrarily, while the Board felt that was no fairer way to apply the cuts.

Nancy Ceriello commented on the importance of the public safety, noting she recently had an incident which took the State Police an hour and a half to respond.

Steve Palmer wanted to know what the bottom-line was (with the new allocation). Mrs. Pinkham gave the following breakdown: \$141,630 for the Police and \$56,908 for the Fire. Mr. Palmer hoped that those that engineered the cut (at the Town Meeting) have found it amusing at this time. Chairman Mullins noted that everyone is doing the best they can, as money had already been trimmed prior to the Town Meeting, and the Town will now just have to live within the budget given.

Heidi Pelchat inquired about the possibility of an independent source providing equipment, etc. for Public Safety. Chairman Mullins advised that the Board can accept gifts to the Town explaining that if the gift is valued at less than \$5,000 then it needs to be acknowledged at a Selectmen's Meeting and gifts of more than \$5,000 needs to be accepted at a Public Hearing. Also noted was that no gifts can be given that would require the expenditure of Town funds, i.e. a new boat that would need gas, etc. to operate.

Dee Blake again inquired about stimulus funds. Selectman Klumb advised that stimulus funds were not for operating budgets already in existence. There was general discussion on applying for stimulus funds as they become available. The office has been very cognizant of this issue.

Mrs. Jones will attend a Local Official Workshop at the Local Government Center in Concord on June 13, 2009.

Fire Chief Pouliot was approved by the Board to contact someone to do a rough-in inspection needed for new construction of a home owned by Geoff Carson of Cashell Lane.

Chairman Mullins opened discussion on the Purchase Order tabled at the last meeting for the Tasers for the Police Department (this number was slightly revised). Chief Milano introduced Al Burbank from the Local Government Center. He talked about the tasers from a risk standpoint, noting he was a former Police Chief. He advised that with law enforcement one always wants to avoid any possible lawsuits or the possibility of being named in a lawsuit. The most common lawsuits are filed because of the use of force by law enforcement officials. He noted that LGC highly supported the use of tasers as a tool to contain suspects,

keeping the hands on force at a minimum. LGC has had had no claims resulting from the use of tasers and highly supports the training and use of tasers as an acceptable tool. Selectman Hashem inquired about the training and documentation. Mr. Burbank noted that there is a standardized training program with Chief Milano again advising that he has a certified instructor on staff. Mr. Burbank noted that there would be an annual re-certification necessary that would result in a small cost to the Town. Selectman Klumb again inquired about the results if used on an unhealthy subject. Mr. Burbank advised that the taser locks up the external muscles, though there could be other health issues unrelated to the use of the taser that could result in problems. Bruce Lantman inquired as to whether the company had a "hold harmless" clause to which Mr. Burbank responded that they do not.

Because of the budget constraints, the Board asked Chief Milano if he would have the staff available to use the tasers. Referring to Department Policy for lay-offs, Chief Milano advised that he needed Board approval to lay-off any personnel, indicating that he would like to request at least two tasers at this time at a cost of \$2,022.11, indicating that he could be certified so there would be no additional cost, as he is salaried, for training in the use of the tasers. Selectman Klumb made a motion to amend Purchase Order 11 to cover the purchase of two tasers as noted above; seconded by Selectman Hashem and approved.

After a quick review of the Personnel Policy, Chairman Mullins asked Chief Milano what he would recommend given the new budget numbers for the Police Department (regarding staffing). Chief Milano asked the Board to give approval tonight for him to lay-off at least one full-time officer, which he felt that the new budget would require, advising that he would need more time to review the budget to see if the second full-time officer could be kept. Chairman Mullins inquired if he would suggest keeping the more expensive full-time officer and possibly the part-time officers or what, with the Board recommending the Chief get the maximum number of hours possible within the budget constraints. Chief Milano advised that he was not in favor of keeping the last hired officer and lay off the officer that has been with the Department the longest. Chairman Mullins noted that that would conflict with the most hours for the money. Selectman Hashem noted that it was not a Selectmen's decision, asking Chief Milano if the Board would get a formal decision. The Chief again asked for approval to lay-off one full-time officer, realizing he could keep one full-time officer for at least a short time until he can further review the budget given tonight. Chairman Mullins reminded the Chief that he had indicated that it would take \$23,000 to efficiently operate his Department, with the Chief noting that Chairman Mullins could be correct, that the Department may be down to just himself. Selectman Klumb made a motion to allow Chief Milano to lay-off one full-time officer; seconded by Selectman Hashem and approved. It was realized that another meeting would be needed to hear Chief Milano's recommendations after he has a chance to review the numbers. Selectman Hashem requested that Chief Milano work with Mrs. Pinkham to see if there are any stimulus funds available for Police Departments. Chief Milano thought that any funds would not be available until fall.

Kelly Clark asked if the MS 2 were posted. Mrs. Pinkham noted that it was not a form that required posting, but was certainly available. Ms. Clark felt it would have been helpful if an analysis of the budget for Article 21 were available for public inspection.

Selectman Hashem made a motion to dissolve the Highway Committee established by the Board of Selectmen at their meeting of August 26, 1996 (this committee has been inactive for some time); seconded by Selectman Klumb and approved.

Selectman Hashem made a motion to post all of the Selectmen's Public Notices on the Town Hall bulletin board outside and on the website (internet); seconded by Selectman Klumb and approved.

Selectman Hashem made a motion to recess this meeting until Thursday, April 23, 2009 at 7:00 P.M. at the Town Hall; seconded by Selectman Klumb and approved.

8:45 P.M. Selectman Hashem made a motion to recess this meeting until Thursday, April 23, 2009 at 7:00 P.M. at the Town Hall; seconded by Selectman Klumb and approved.

Thomas S. Mullins
BOS/jj

David E. Klumb

George K. Hashem